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UNCLAS KATHMANDU 000255

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SUBJECT: ICRC RESUMES VISITS TO KATHMANDU JAILS

REF: KATHMANDU 0088

1. (SBU) According to International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Head Delegate Jean-Jacques Bovay, on January 30 the Government of Nepal (GON) began allowing ICRC access to prisoners for the first time since the November 26 imposition of a state of national emergency. Bovay said that his organization has registered 62 prisoners at two Kathmandu jails, including the district police station at Hanuman Dhoka, and expressed confidence that his organization will soon regain its previous unfettered access to jails throughout the country. Bovay thanked the Embassy and the USG for pressing the Government of Nepal (GON) to ensure confidential ICRC access to prisoners despite the

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emergency.

2. (SBU) Comment: Following November 26, the Embassy and other USG visitors have on a number of occasions reminded our GON interlocutors--including the Prime Minister and the Chief of Army Staff--of their country's international treaty obligations to allow ICRC access to prisoners. Each time we were assured-- most recently during the January 18-19 visit of the Secretary of State--that resumed access would soon be forthcoming. We will follow up with the ICRC to ensure that visits to jails outside of Kathmandu resume as well.

Malinowski